THE ATTRACTIVE WAY

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BV 4501
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"I AM ABSOLUTELY CONVINCED THAT TO FOLLOW CHRIST IS THE BEST WAY."



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With love to Mabel R.
Christmas, 1916.



"TO FOLLOW CHRIST IS THE MOST PROFITABLE AND COMMON SENSE THING FOR US TO TRY TO DO."



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BY

WILFRED T. GRENFELL, M.D.



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THE ATTRACTIVE WAY

* * *

I

HOW TO FIND IT

THAT all human life, and mine in particular, can have a high purpose and a glorious future is with me an axiom. I have no message for any man who insists that life is purposeless and fruitless; though I would certainly agree that it is fruitless if purposeless, and purposeless if fruitless. That we want to win whatever prize our life makes possible is a corollary; and that there is a way to win it, is another. I look upon myself simply as a wayfarer quite capable of losing the way, as I have often done in our arctic snow-fields and among these impenetrable fogs. I am absolutely convinced that to follow Christ is the best way and that if that way does not attract every one to it the fault is ours, who claim to be trying to walk it. In other words, to follow Christ is the

most profitable and common-sense thing for us to try to do. I am certain that if it were rightly represented, his work and way have met with such success already, and mankind has been so altered by his influence, that his way would make an attractive, natural, and effective appeal, whereas now many men are indifferent or averse to it.

Life is a current. Yet we need not be always trying to dam it up and bring it to a standstill. The conservatism of to-day is the liberalism of yesterday. God can still look after his own business, as he has done through the ages, without having us denounce, criticize, and judge those who do not see eye to eye with us. The criticism of others, by men who think they possess a monopoly, is worse than any gossip of the tea-table. We are repeatedly forbidden to judge others; and yet we who think we are on "the way" do not seem able to forgo the pleasure which weak humanity finds in promoting criticism and scandal.

We have forgotten that humility is an essential characteristic of "the way." The most intellectually humble men are

invariably to be found among the world's greatest scholars and famous scientists, while the most self-assertive and offensive have been found, too often, among those who were professedly the most earnest representatives of the Christ; and, alas, they have many exponents to-day. More humility, more common sense of a cheerful kind, and more hard work are what are needed in us, whose lives are the real advertisements for "the way," if we wish to make it attractive to the modern young men, the makers of the future.

Many Paths, One Goal

Of course not all men can agree at one time as to what is really most desirable. You have only to go into the street and ask the first half dozen men whom you meet the simplest question, to find that in methods scarcely two men ever agree, even while the main aim of all may be identical. Yesterday three of us started to go to the hospital over a distance of some ten miles, for at ten o'clock I had an important operation to perform.

After disagreeing as to whether dog, sledge or boat would be quicker, two voted for boat, and so we went in that way. Three miles out we met floe ice tight to the land. One of the two who had voted for boat now wanted to return and take a dog sledge. One voted for hauling the boat up on the rocks and walking, and one for punting through the ice if possible. We ended by agreeing, for expediency's sake, that all should adopt the same method, and work hard at it; and we plumped for the boat.

For the first half-hour leads of open water close to the feet of the cliffs, in spite of the breaking seas, allowed us to gain about two miles; then it became imperative to keep off among the ice, now jumping on the pans and poling or dragging the boat, now hauling her over flat, level sheets. At the end of an hour's hard pounding, with our eyes fixed on the immediate work, we happened to look up to the hills. The floe had been carrying us bodily north, and we were exactly where we had started. However, we "plugged at it," and even-

tually made our appointment with five minutes to spare.

On looking back we calculated that we would have accomplished the task equally well by any of the three methods, if we had been in earnest, and worked as hard. I fail to see now, even by the light of experience, which was the ideal way. The trouble was we did not know which way was ideal and had no means of finding out. We had no guide to whom to appeal and could only judge by our past experience. If we had been provided with fast, strong horses, or a railway train, land would have been the ideal way; if our ice-protected motor boat had not been still buried deep under a snow-bank, sea would have been the ideal way; if we had had an aeroplane — well, we might or might not have arrived — we should have thought it ideal anyway. The road is very hilly, and a long-winded runner subject to seasickness would have won out best by land; a short, stocky, fat fellow, best by boat; — and none of us could drive an aeroplane in any case.

No human being can devise any one

plan which is best to help every kind of man, since men differ so radically that what helps one hinders another. Paul claimed that all knowledge or science is a current thing, transitory, passing away with the flight of time and the evolution of wisdom. His has certainly passed away in every single intellectual position which can to-day be called science. We hold neither his chemistry, physiology, physics, astronomy, botany, geology, or any other "ology." Only those advocates of any plan of life are attractive and persuasive who show humility and charity.

No Universal Method

In the most recent text-books which tell us how to restore to health the poor fellow upon whom I was hastening home to operate this morning, there are at least ten different methods, all equally highly recommended. Each individual's method is often the result of the clinic in which he was brought up, or of his own peculiar intellectual gifts; and the stronger these influences are, the more convinced the man is that his is the

only way. Fortunately in matters dealing with physical life the exponents of methods have never be[illegible]ed to offer the abuse, inflict the injuries, and express the contempt for those who differ from them which have so unworthily characterized many who claim pre-eminence of infallibility for their own methods of restoring to moral and spiritual health the sick in heart and soul.

In the endeavor to restore physical health there have arisen many schools and each has its ardent adherents. But with the increase of knowledge we have come to recognize that the most successful way is always that which is most natural, or which most closely imitates Nature's way, — which means simply the way of the great Giver of Life. Humanity has not discovered an ideal way in things pertaining to physical life, and we have no right to suppose that there is any possibility of our fully attaining the ideal, viz., the power to prolong mortal life till it shall become eternal. We know of no surgically infallible representative of God here on earth, in the past or the present, to whom

we can go, so that by receiving his instruction or imitating his methods we may reach, or ever even agree on, a universally acceptable method.

The Desire to be Helpful

Christ restricted himself to laying down great principles, applicable to all ages, leaving mankind to adapt them to peculiarities of time and place. A life which adorns these principles and illustrates them in a common-sense way is now attractive to all men. Men to-day are more chivalrous than were the bloodthirsty Knights of the Round Table, and enjoy doing helpful things, and that at personal cost, even though they do not wish and will not acknowledge any labels. The ideal is no longer "not doing wrong," or even the guilelessness of the Colonel Newcome type; modern young men love "something doing," that is achievement. I remember Phillips Brooks' words, "What, you say, the man who imperfectly understands Christ, who doesn't know anything about his divinity, who denies the great doctrines

of the church regarding him, is he a Christian? Certainly he is, my friends. There is no other test than this, the following of Jesus Christ. I cannot sympathize with any feeling that desires to make the name of Christian a narrower name. I would know any man as a Christian, rejoice to know any man as a Christian, whom Jesus would recognize as a Christian, and Jesus Christ, I am sure, in those old days, recognized his followers even if they came after him with the blindest sight."

II

DON'T VERSUS DO

FOR many years I had been interested in what, for lack of other description, I am bound to call "the religious life" of the people in a certain fishing village. Young men had grown to beyond middle age since I first knew them and were still steadily adhering to three Sunday services and three week-day meetings. I had already pointed it out as a place where the beautiful results of a true Christian religion were beyond question.

Some of the leading men had been discussing the morality of one or two richer men in the harbor who had taken out grants for the land, were cutting it up into lots, and making newcomers pay for it. They had decided that it was not Christian. A little later I was talk-

ing to one of them, a really first-class old fellow.

"Uncle Joe, didn't you take a Government grant?"

"Yes, Doctor."

"Haven't you sold four lots already?"

"Why, yes, Doctor. It gives me a few cents in my old age."

"I thought you said it was wrong to take up the land and sell it to newcomers."

"So it is, Doctor, so it is. But you see we be only poor men." Religion here was theory, not practise; none of the others had any land to sell.

Applying Religion to Forestry

Another time the best thinking men in the place had agreed that in order to try and save the beauty of the harbor and to attract visitors there, who would spend money for the benefit of those incapacitated for earning their living by fishing, a law should be passed forbidding the cutting of the trees within a certain radius of the harbor. During a trial of one of the men for breaking

the law, one or two men asked leave to speak. One of them was the leader of the "revival" services which were being held in the harbor. He wanted to state his opinion that "the fishermen were not 'out for beauty, but for comfort.' They didn't see why the men should not cut down the few little trees left and grub up the roots as well, as has been done in other places." The Bench, which had not "got religion" by their standard, tried to point out that it would be only for a short while that they would derive the slightest benefit, and that it would injure the place permanently. Moreover, a beautiful home and harbor always help one to live a beautiful life. Cutting the trees spoiled the gardens, as the snow all drifted away and left the bare ground. It kept all those who were unable, like him, to go fishing without a chance of employment. No man could live to himself anyhow.

But the man went away declaring that he did not see what he was going to get out of it, and he thought a man should do as he liked for his comfort. Business being over, he could now go back to

religion for the evening. Even these trifling instances suggest how such parodies of Christ's way have made it seem contemptible in the minds of thinking men.

The Doer Always Acclaimed

The healthy human mind rejects, the vigorous youthful mind rejects, and the younger and more healthful they are the more they do not care to hide the fact that they hate the doctrine that the ideal way is "not to do." The policy of Fabius Cunctator is possibly commendable only when it corresponds with the Scotch ideal of biding one's time, or getting fully ready to deliver a crushing blow. The surgeon who refuses to operate in an early stage of the disease, fearing for his own reputation, really neglects to operate. The wayfarer who does not help his neighbor in trouble, for fear of spoiling his clothes, or even of his life, is neglecting his duty, and his philosophy is contemptible. The best spirit in every man acclaims him only as ideal who does things, at whatever sacrifice.

One winter the leading exponents of a sect for which I have the highest respect, and among whom I number some of my best friends with the highest ideals, adopted and imported for their instruction in the way of life a book issued by their church for the guidance of its members. Not to drink, smoke, dance, play cards, go to the theater, work on Sundays, swear, and other indulgences and occupations were scheduled and "indexed," as were many sins of immorality which go without saying and would have been just as well omitted. Taboos were laid on certain forms of art which appeal to many, on entertainments which many advocate as being especially regenerative, and on forms of clothing which in some countries are positively national. It so happened that a most ardent young medical man and proud adherent of a noted Scotch clan was spending the winter with me at his own expense, for no other reason than to try and realize his own ideal of the way of life, and had brought with him the special garments it was his proud distinction to be allowed

to wear. As he had arrived in the late fall, he had not yet found the climate here specially adapted to bare knees, but all the same he was looking forward to displaying these garments to honor some special occasion. I can still remember his face when I pointed out that they were included in this Index Expurgatorius.

It might be supposed that to make every seventh day one of rest, and to call that day the one now almost universally agreed upon, and to insist upon its observance, now that it has been scientifically and philosophically demonstrated as advisable, is at least more or less ideal and not calculated to "stir up evil." But the problem as to which is the day we must not do things has been one of our worst troubles. There came into our harbor a teacher who insisted that the day before was a better day, the real and only ideal day, and its observance, instead of our chosen day, essential to the way of life. A very few left their old church and followed him. They ostentatiously went out fishing while their former comrades of

"the way," still studied and followed the precepts of the expurgatory book. I can still see being thrown from the church on Monday the firewood which had been carefully cut on Sunday and brought freely for the humble ministry of fuel. My Scotch friend had left the Coast, but here at least he stands avenged. Many believe that even dogs are affected by ridicule, and certainly nothing can be more harmful to any human cause than that it should be obviously ridiculous.

The Beauty of the Open Mind

The recognition of this is of primal importance in these days for the welfare of the kingdom of God. Gentleness now is needed, not so much of action, for that is forced upon us, but gentleness — gentle manliness — of thought. Self-assertiveness is one of the most repellent attributes of any man. No great man can be so or he is not great. Fancy Lord Lister sneering at and denouncing even those whose "old ways" his immortal discovery was to revolu-

tionize. On the contrary they denounced the way of the man who conferred one of the greatest blessings mankind has ever received. Harvey gave mankind the inestimable boon of the knowledge of the circulation of the blood, but the old school of his day only accepted it practically at the point of the bayonet. Jenner and Pasteur saved millions of lives through their patient and masterful work. The old school abused them, and still, in spite of facts, the shallow denounce them.

It has been the same with every advance which can be named which has helped to revolutionize human knowledge and advantage human life. It seems it must be so. But at least let us not do this ignorantly, defeating our own ends and debarring men from following the Christ avowedly, because of our intellectual conceit or overslept conservatism. Science suggests to us now that there is no such thing as matter, all is a form of motion and we merely the expression of perpetual vortices of whirling motion. Can we not be content with merely judging

ourselves and criticizing our own methods?

The Wholesome School of Experience

Experience would teach me that as men grow older the strong bias of youthful days, like the rills in thawing snow, tends to become obliterated, and the refreshing streams do run at last into larger and more beneficent channels. This, to us medical men, is not a symptom of defective processes in the machine which makes thought possible. Meanwhile we have broadened the meaning of the word "monomania" to include and qualify as needing control the whole genus of those whose misfortune it is to arrogate to themselves intellectually that which they most certainly do not possess. Experience was suggested by the great Master as the one school in which all can learn whether his teachings as to "the way" were of God or man. This school for doing things may cost us dear, but it has the merits of no undeserved invectives, and even if we do make failures in our attempts, even if we do uninten-

tionally select wrong methods, such wanderings as those of Kim and his lama ended in the haven where they would be because they kept on, and Tyl and Mytil found the Blue Bird by much doing. Shall we not concede at least that this may be equally as true of any man's groping, even if his methods are not ours?

I am now speaking to those who are in earnest about life. Eternity is not long enough to convince the blasé indifferentist who cares nothing for life or believes that neither the way nor the goal exists at all. It seems futile to spend time arguing about ideals with those in whom physical or intellectual wealth has only aroused a contempt for life and a chronic condition of boredom. Nor does it seem more profitable to expect words to alter the way of life of those in whom either wealth or illiteracy has permitted an unreasoning bias against life to develop. The foolishness of mere word preaching can only save the few anyhow. Dean Hodges is not the only authority who has put on record that he is a fortunate man who, because of its mystery,

sees the dignity of life, and he quotes Mazzini as saying that a man has learned nothing unless he has learned to wonder. Bishop Brooks says the outlook into mystery has ever a stronger intellectual influence than the inspection of discovered facts.

Certainly if entrance to heaven depends on an intellectual attitude, quite the majority will be left out, while our colored friends in the South will probably be far more generously represented. A mixture of Revelation and a minstrel show always left me as a boy with the idea of heaven as a place especially adapted for pleasing them, as a loud noise does the adherents of certain sects. I have positively heard men hide what should be their despair at this fact by quoting the Master as saying that we cannot expect the wise or rich in God's gifts to be largely represented. Such a view of heaven obviously does not make it very attractive to young manhood.

III

CUBBY-HOLING RELIGION

THE fear that Christ's way of life involves communism and socialism on the absolutely equal division of property basis led largely to the boxing off of religion from every-day life, and a sort of tacit acknowledgment has arisen that it is too radical a thing to mix with ordinary business. The process has made it such an enfeebled and unattractive plant that many persons now think it an exotic which needs a glass cover and a cubby hole all to itself, otherwise it would perish. The Oriental hyperbole was perfectly understood in Christ's day. To believe that he insisted on men hating their parents and their own lives is a direct contradiction of his own statements that he came not to abolish but to fulfil that law, which includes only

one with a special promise attached to it; viz., that we must honor our parents. It would be positively suicidal for a physician in the arctic not to have two coats, even though I have seen children and even adults without what one could properly call one. Christ obviously leaves us freedom to use common sense, natural sense, sense the direct gift of the Creator of the brain, in dealing with property and business. We know of only one rich man whom he told to give away what was ruining his character.

Raising the Moral Level

The wisest teachers of this age are one with the Master in agreeing that no way is too expensive to attain that supreme prize of life, character. Thus some consider that the man who corners foodstuff, cuts down his workmen to the last penny, squeezes the fishermen to the lowest price, obtains special protection for his wares at the consumer's expense, can yet be a Christian if he believes in the miraculous birth of Christ, his resurrection, etc., and sings hymns and

prays prayers. We simply cannot conceive God as valuing clothes and attitudes and ceremonies as he does life. We must remember that unless our following of "the way" leads us to raise our entire standard of business morality, to a common-sense Judge we are not so good as other heathen who more nearly live up to their high moral code. We expect to answer before a tribunal characterized by sanity and righteousness, before a Judge whom Scripture suggests is also gifted with a sense of humor.

Why should not every judge, as one has shown us a judge can do, make it the aim and object of his professional work to cure the criminal? Why should it not be the absorbing interest of every medical man to eliminate himself by adding to his labors "social work" which should tend more and more to eradicate disease? Why should not manufacturers, as some do, make it their chief aim to dignify and reward their laborers; why should not retailers seek to do for their customers as they would be done by? Why should not the clergy seek only for the advance of God's Kingdom,

and not for that of the little church which they call theirs? Judge Lindsey, Parson Worcester, Doctor Cabot, the National Cash Register Company, Lever Brothers are notable examples of what such a spirit can do to help on righteousness, joy, and peace.

Educators are certainly trying more to-day to teach their pupils to select and prepare for lives where they can contribute most to the common good. Property owners to-day see that it pays, even in a mundane sense, to study their tenants' interests. Statesmen are more and more exhibiting the same spirit, and the voters are ever increasingly demanding it. Christ would have a far better chance of occupying the White House to-day than ever he had for Herod's throne. The fact is we know that Christ's way is the way for business, for we have learned that lasting joy and worth-while success are only to be measured by what we give, and not what we get. Only the shallow can afford to laugh at Christ's teaching that it is more blessed to give than to receive. Only those who for some reason are behind

the times in knowledge can afford to-day to laugh at the old alchemist who said that precious stones can be made out of dirt and gold out of apparently ignoble elements.

To many, much modern business does seem inconsistent with Christ's way of life; one could not fancy him gambling in stocks or squeezing unearned increment out of land grabbing. I remarked to one friend last year who was pointing out to me a section of land out of which he had just made a big "scoop," "It seems hard on the newcomers." He looked puzzled, and then said, "That's business. You can't expect to mix religion and business"—as if they were oil and water.

An Avoided Subject

The divorce of our religion from our life has become so accepted that we hardly notice it. For the ordinary business man or college student to talk about his relation to things eternal under everyday circumstances is entirely abnormal, however convinced we may be that we

are Christians. It has almost become immoral. We speak of it with bated breaths as of something outside our lives, instead of it being the very breath of our life. Others again consider it so intimate to their personality that they do not wish to have to defend it, thinking partly that it must be intuitive and carries no credentials to convince the ordinary mind, and partly deterred by the exhibitions of that cheap emotionalism which so readily lends itself to parody; and anyway they do not wish to talk about it as being too sacred for every-day life.

This divorce is not recent; it dates back to childhood and training. Thus it is probably right to say grace before meals, but people would look askance if you began to speak naturally about Jesus Christ as if he were sitting at the table. Dinner of course is a vital part of your daily life. Yet the fact that the religion of the churches seems to be divorced from every-day life is certainly not due to the fact that there is any diminution of interest in or reverence for the person of Christ.

THE ATTRACTIVE WAY

The absurdity of cubby-holing any section of life cannot be better illustrated than in the one which unfortunately affects the majority of men in their most impressionable and formative period of li .

Everyone knows that if six chance men were to be thrown together who claimed that they were Christians, and if some one were to ask them whether a Christian man were to play cards — say draw poker — there would be a difference of opinion. I have heard two clergymen argue that whist and bridge were all right for Christians, whereas euchre, poker, and forty-five were non-Christian. One might have been back in Judea listening to a discussion among the Phar about phylacteries. If Jesus had d in, wouldn't he have said, "Whatever are you fighting about in this cubby-hole, while all the rest of the world outside is busy living?"

Varying Judgments

Some Christian leaders and teachers to-day are thoroughly opposed to the

theater; others just as strongly biased in its favor. Some denounce horse racing; others men racing; still others physical competitions to which they are not inclined, such as the noble art of self-defense. In the end one would expect to see published a list of games and pastimes especially designed for young Christians; only when written down in black and white it looks ridiculous. Common sense realizes that in play as well as in work a man cannot qualify as a Christ follower by the games he doesn't play. It results in the stigmatizing of drinking alcohol, smoking opium or tobacco, taking unearned increment in the one particular way of getting it to which is given the name of betting or gambling.

I have now an old fisherman dying of cancer. He can neither read nor write, but lying in bed he contributes to life the service which is now all he is capable of rendering — by displaying a patient spirit and a happy and contented mind, now that we have allowed him his pipe. We get as much benefit out of the tobacco as he does. Often when

I am tired out I find I can get mental rest better by playing a game of cribbage than in any other way. To some who regard this as a game for old ladies exclusively the above remark will sound almost axiomatic.

We realize the dangers of all cumulative drugs; so we do those of even too much bread and butter. I never forget a poor patient who choked himself by pushing too much bread and butter down his throat. We recognize the dangers of fog and ice, of boats and guns, of bad air and tight clothes, of going upstairs and coming down again. We realize the serious dangers of gambling, card playing, prize fighting, loafing, of too much money, and of too little of emotional excitement, of praying, of singing, of asceticism, of thinking of self too much from a worldly religious point of view, of worldliness and unworldliness, and of being in the world at all, such as the "unco guid" would weep over. I have known a man thank God for carrying the latest addition to his large family off to heaven and far from the temptations of this wicked world.

No need to add here to the list of dangers. Suffice it to say that Christ labeled and cubby-holed none of them; it has remained for the arrogance of man to affix the labels. I believe Christ did label hypocrisy. Christ's way permits one to be a life-long total abstainer. He permits me to condemn alcohol as a beverage, but not the man who takes it. He stands or falls to God alone.

The Sentences that are Saving the World

Our lakes and fjords here in spring, after the snows have melted, are perfectly clear, life-giving reservoirs; all the useless matter sinks to the bottom. But as soon as man comes along and mixes up these God-given supplies for cleansing and refreshing human life they become useless for the purpose for which they were intended and often harmful. I believe that if the greatest minds in the best equipped laboratories of earth, amidst the man-made fog which now obscures "the way," would search for Christ's way just as now they search for

siderium or coronium or one of the new elements known to exist in the heavens but not yet found on earth, all they would have left to offer their students would be a guide-book of a few sentences. But it would be an appeal to the common sense of all time.

The pages of history are the sign manual of the advance of Christ's Kingdom, and his teaching will always be found to answer to the latest tests of the ages. To win out we must want to win. We must exercise choice, and therefore "the way" should be made especially attractive, and it can only be that to real manhood if it is part and parcel of everything else. So long as it is in a separate box labeled "Religion" it is obvious that a very small percentage of the desirable active element will consciously select it as their department.

The need seems to be a sort of "back to the land" movement and a remorseless tearing up of the weeds of superstition, tradition, fanaticism, conservatism, and of well-meaning mental instability, till once again it is just God's own soil to sweeten and nourish and

cause the human soul to fructify, instead of a thorn-choked wilderness with a perennial crop of sanctimonious selfishness.

The best revival we ever saw here was when the tail end of a cyclone actually took the building, which the folk had mistaken for God's church, and whisked it, seats, floor, and all, right into the middle of the harbor. All hands found refreshing supplies of God's grace in the free labor cheerfully given and laboriously served for no cash return, and in the new house of their public worship, because of the personal labor every board and timber represented to them. Poor people who build their own little homes love them out of all proportion to the occupiers of even model tenements or modern palaces. Enduring love is the true test of real value. Even medicine and cold still find love and gratitude when they are understood.

The actual value of a diamond ring for your nose or ear, or any other portion of your anatomy, with the anxiety and expense of properly protecting it, is problematical and deferred, except so far as it carries cherished memories or poten-

tial energy. Among the gold medals, nobly earned, which have proved of most value to mankind was the large one given to General Gordon, and its value was in the fact that a man could be found who, because he was a follower of Christ, when the poor Chinese were starving by thousands, was a life citizen of the world enough to scrape off the inscription and send it to the famine fund. That kind of religion is always modern. It is what men think now Christ would have done. It is what they would like to have done. It is not the result of a temporary supreme effort which says "I will be religious today." It is the natural fruit of the land, not the spasmodic effort of a whilom hot-bed.

The Cure for Lukewarmness

If you want to save a man from temptation, self, and despair, find him some work to do. To show the world that Christ needs a "Labor Party," and then to show the members how to work, and act as whip for the party is the rôle which the church must play if it is

not to atrophy out of existence. Lukewarmness is becoming more and more incompatible with manhood's digestion, and the church which does not lay supreme emphasis on work must inevitably, in the expressive language of Scripture, be "Vomited out of the mouth."

Two years ago I was discussing with a young university graduate of considerable wealth and no ties this very question — where he could best put in his life. His gifts were great, but especially strong along a certain line. We longed for his help here, but we decided that he had a larger field for his talents in big cities.

Here again I believe most intensely in the need of that arm of contact with the live Rail, which we call "prayer." I have never seen real prayer go unanswered, and I have seen it remove mountains. Yet it was made in secret to the Father who seeth in secret.

The need for all which any man has to give is a corollary also of the axiom that life is given us for a purpose, and this surely is high enough to

appeal to anyone. Still in the world there is merciless competition. Still men, anxious to work, starve for the need of it, while endless work goes undone. God knows there exists a need for really up-to-date doctors and lawyers with Christ's spirit, to heal and advise and save, if they will only go where there is need and not necessarily a cash return. The giving and not the getting decides the location; though I do not mean to say that any place where a man's lot is thrown is not needy enough, if he will only find out that need and try to meet it. There are festering, overcrowded slums, and lands are lying idle while the world is in need of their possible products. The fear of the wolf of hunger still overshadows the old age of countless of our fellowmen and eventually drags them down to a miserable death. Vampires living on vice and frauds living on ignorance still find plentiful victims who might be saved.

A man need not recognize a label, but that he should recognize and avow his own definite decision to be a worker is essential for his development and for

his full usefulness to others who are following the same "way." Among the many university students who each year come to help out down here I have never yet found one whom the whole lot will characterize as worth while who has not been not only willing literally to go into the drain to dig, but spoiling for it or any useful work. No man who appeals to manhood has false shame about avowing such a purpose. The term "Christian" was never intended to be a final judgment on a closed career — only to characterize the follower of the way of life of the Nazarene carpenter. It has only again to become synonymous with unselfish aims and solid work, and no longer be a term for intellectual orthodoxy, and it will attract a hundred where it now attracts one.

IV

THE DOCTOR TO THE MINISTER

A DIALOGUE

ONE Sunday after church I was talking to my friend the minister. "Did you know Jim Mathew's wife had a baby last night? I was there till daylight. She hasn't a solitary thing in the house; not a rag for the baby, and only a mouthful of dry flour for herself. She only got through at all owing to the hospital feeding her these last two months." She lived only about two hundred and fifty yards from the little church, and we are a small village.

"No," he replied; "the Orange Lodge looks after its members, and Jim's an Orangeman."

"That may be true, but the whole family is starving, and your people are doing nothing except to talk about feed-

ing the hungry. Don't you recognize a need for definite organization of Christ followers just for this purpose and others similar to it?"

"Yes," he replied; "but on a scattered coast like this it is all a man can do to get around and do his preaching."

"Preaching is only a way to an end. However, it is a good thing you've got in that boy's club," I replied. "It is the first thing which ever came to this harbor that really reached the boys. If I want to know about any lad in trouble, that good fellow Jones can always tell me; the boys just love him."

"Oh, our church hasn't anything to do with the club. You see, they keep it open prayer-meeting nights, and the older members don't believe in it."

"But you do yourself, surely?"

"Of course. But you know, Doctor, one has to make concessions, and some people are so bigoted. These are our very best people too, in every other way. But they are terribly afraid of anything new."

"What kind of people are bigoted?" I answered. "Are they Christians?"

He smiled and looked, as I know he was, sorely troubled. He had been taught to cubby-hole religion and was just beginning to wake up to the evil and the waste of it; and yet he had an honest fear that God needed convention more than common sense.

So I went on, "You just tell the next minister when you go, to be on the look-out for a cross and crown of thorns, which I know he'll get, if only he will be brave enough and have faith enough to stand for some of these things in which your older members do not believe. He must at first expect to lose on a count of heads. But you see religious people will have to answer to a rational tribunal. Spontaneous gi[illegible]g may be all right and very enjoyable, but it isn't meeting the problem. If we are to try and act as Christians in relation to this problem of poverty, we must give it as much thought and effort, organized and combined, as we possibly can — in fact as if we were arranging for some one we really cared about, like our wife, or our children, or shall we say ourselves? What do we expect when we have to

acknowledge to a righteous Judge that whatever we did, you as a clergyman and I as a doctor, or anyone else in his special occupation, was most unbusiness-like and a failure? The hungry were not fed, and we were. The young men and women did go wrong in spite of us. We had no time to devote to trying to train their tastes, to occupy their waste time, or develop their latent talents; to teach them industries to add to their earning capacities; to improve their sanitary conditions; to teach them the laws of health and the values of food; though some of these things were all some of us had to give the world.

"What do you think Christ would be doing if he came here and saw folk suffering the curse of the damned from scurvy, just from want of knowing how to lay out the value of their fish? If he saw them with beri-beri because they couldn't cook decently, and wouldn't use the whole meal flour and beans to prevent it; and miserable children, crooked legged and narrow chested, because one cannot feed cows in this country unless one is well off — can't

you see him giving cooking lessons? Can't you see him smashing window panes to let in fresh air to consumptive houses, so as to let people know by experience what can save them? Can't you see him holding night schools to teach men to manage better and economize such gifts as he has given them? I can see him night after night saying to a class of our old graybeards, 'Three times three is nine; two times four is eight,' and chalking it up on the wall till poor old Jim could read his count; and so save a few cents here and there to have 'a s'prise tin o' milk in t' locker, to have it to give to t' missis when dere comes a pinch.'

"I see him starting schemes to sell necessities cheaper; fighting to find markets for better prices for our staple products. I see him training voters or serving in the assembly; I see him a statesman negotiating treaties. I see him helping fellows to go to college, to go to technical schools. If you had lived in Nazareth, Parson, and seen 'Carpentry done here' on a sign over a house, and if you knew that Jesus and

Joseph were the men who were going to take on your job, would you expect the doors to jam and the windows to stick? If a carpenter did a shoddy piece of work for me I should strongly suspect his Christianity, and all his professions and confessions of faith wouldn't induce me to give him another job."

"But how can a church do all those things?"

"A church? What is a church but a body of live men and women, united so as better to relive Christ's life? It must surely keep trying to do these things, and do them in Christ's way, or it isn't a Christian church at any rate."

"But, Doctor, it's impossible for a minister to have time to instruct in all those things. Isn't it his business to be preaching the Gospel?"

"My dear Parson, do you honestly think you have given us one single piece of information since you came on this shore that we did not know already? Don't you think that before you go into the pulpit we know by the cut of your

clothing, even if we don't know your name, the pith of what you are going to say? Words are only man-made ways to convey ideas, and pretty poorly they often enough express them, especially if they are addressed to those who cannot speak the particular language or cannot read or write like some of your folk here. Everyone understands lives, and like experience they are the most reliable teachers — read of all men, too. Doesn't it seem to you that the deeper a man's experience is, the less ready he is to try and be an oracle on the one subject which your very office binds you to claim to be an authority?

"Will your successor, as did your predecessor, confine all his God-given gifts to telling us the same story, the same maxims, and the same illustrations which we have heard a hundred times? When our minds awaken, and the progress which has opened the minds of laboring men in other places awakens our intelligence as well, and we come to weigh the church's work in the balance of our common sense, won't you, Parson, have any fear of the decision of a jury

of, say, the best twelve good and true men in our harbor? What will the great all-knowing Judge say? 'What did you do to elevate the intelligence of my young men?' 'I talked to them and asked you to do the rest.' 'Did you do nothing more?' 'Nothing.' 'What did you do to improve the condition of the poor?' 'I told the congregation to feed and clothe them and gave away all I had.' 'Did you do nothing more?' 'Nothing. I hadn't time.' 'What did you do for the health and homes and economics of my people?' 'I talked to them and told them to obey and not complain.' 'Did you do nothing more, nothing to improve them?' 'Nothing. I had no time.' 'Did you use all the common sense with which I endowed you to educate, uplift, prevent suffering from reaching my people, with the same intelligent interest you showed in your own wife, in your own boys, in yourself? Are you satisfied with your method of advertising "the way"? Was your love as intelligent as you could make it?'

"What can you answer? I am not for a moment trying to lay down what such a Judge will or will not say about your sermons, preachings, and prayer meetings; but what would you say?"

V

THE MINISTER TO THE DOCTOR
ANOTHER DIALOGUE

IT was his turn now and he began in good earnest. "Doctor, don't you think we ought to be insisting that Jesus was the Son of God?"

"I'd answer that, Parson, by saying that I certainly do. For my part, I believe he was whatever he claimed to be, even if men differ as to what they conceive that really was."

"You believe he was different from us as being God?"

"I have said I believe he was whatever he claimed to be. I think absolutely that each honest man must have his own intellectual interpretation of what he did claim, and that depends on the gray matter of the brain which God has given any particular individual. A

man's life and actions depend on the attitude of his moral and spiritual being."

"Isn't a clergyman bound to preach his own interpretation?"

"Well, I'm not a clergyman, but I should say he was bound only to uplift men to follow Christ. He is neither bound to deny his own convictions or express all of them. I am inclined to think that each denomination expects its clergy to teach what it teaches."

"Would you have a minister a casuist or a sophist, then, by telling only half that he thinks?"

"I know men in every profession who never say in public what their intellect leads them to say to chosen friends, who understand them just as Christ himself did. When the disciples, whom Christ wanted especially to understand, as they were to be his teachers, asked him questions, he didn't always answer them. There is a man next door to you with, in all probability, a fatal disease. The object of the contact of my life with his is to save him, not to kill him. There is a chance that any

human brain may misinterpret. If I went to him and told him that he was going to die, knowing him as I do and his wife as I do, I am morally certain I should kill him. If you went and said, 'If you don't believe as I do, you'll be eternally damned,' it would be simple murder; and if I thought you such a criminal, and cared one jot for Joe's little children, I'd have you locked up."

"Then you don't think he will be eternally damned?"

"My object, like the Master's, is to try and save his life; so is yours. Not what I believe, but what I am going to tell him is the point. I have seen both practises during these last twenty odd years, and I am sure that the wiser men very often withhold what they think and get better results thereby. Is not the sole cause for the existence of our faith to attain results? Or is it to have a pleasing feeling that we have done our duty? Like the lady who sent her loaves of bread to the hungry by a liveried footman, who with each loaf told them not to be gluttonous or to sell it for whisky. Though she believed,

as I think rightly, that total abstinence is far the best way in life, her way of telling the whole of what she thought did not benefit either the cause or the people."

"Then you think Christ wouldn't tell all he thought to our people?"

"Look here, Parson. A year or two ago I gave a series of lantern talks to the people of this very place. The first was local views. It was greeted enthusiastically. Number two was 'the greatest wonders of the world.' It was received somewhat skeptically and with much less interest. The third was on 'starland, or astronomy made easy.' Most of the audience said that they must have been working extra hard that day, they all felt so sleepy.

"Our folk don't see the good of learning to swim. The water is too cold and it takes a lot of time and trouble, and they have an instinctive dread of ever getting beyond their depth. I've got to recognize that it is instinctive and treat it seriously. I'm advising you to do the same. Who are the men round here who are laying down the law to

others most loudly, as if they possessed infallible information concerning the inspiration of the Scriptures, the future of the soul, etc.? You know they aren't the best educated. Why, Parson, do you know that from a series of most carefully collected statistics over a large area it has been found that, with the decline of the revival camp meeting type of religion, there has been a proportional rise in the morality of the people, who have substituted greater dignity, a more 'reasonable service,' and have lost none of the zeal for Christ and his kingdom when they got rid of the emotionalism which was stultifying them and their view of religion?

"Hasn't it always seemed odd to you that those who know least about anything which can be disproved claim to know most about what I take it, from Christ and from Paul, our brains cannot conceive?"

"Then you don't believe in the inspiration of the Bible and that all of it is true?"

"When two men give different accounts of the same thing, Parson, I

believe it is in the thing, but not in the accounts. I don't credit the authors with evil motives, only with being human beings. Don't forget, however, before I say more, that what I now say to you I wouldn't now say to your congregation if I stood in your shoes, for fear of being misunderstood. One should not destroy unless one does it only in order to rebuild a better structure.

"For instance, I personally believe that the gospel according to Matthew was the gospel according to Matthew. I believe that the gospel according to Luke was the gospel according to Luke, and that the gospel according to Mark was not the gospel according to Mark." "Why not?" "Well, because it flavors too strongly of Peter."

"You mean that Peter dictated it, as he was an unlearned and ignorant man?"

"Exactly. I believe it was Peter's version of the matter."

"Don't you think, then, that he was inspired differently from what we are today?"

"My dear Parson, I fear he did possess, as a matter of fact, more of Christ's actual nearness than you or I. Though I only accept that because of the record of his life subsequently. But beyond that, surely our lives if not our words are capable of exactly similar inspiration. Would you believe in Christ more or follow him better if he had turned that stone into bread and so avoided suffering; had used superhuman methods rather than human?"

"No."

"Then why would you want to judge any man as no true follower of Jesus Christ who loves him all the better because he thinks Christ never used us men as machines but as his friends, allowing us to be men that he might have something to praise us for and we something to work for? You'll have a hard battle, Parson, as knowledge goes on, to have a man call himself a Christian at all if you try to make men swallow what it has become impossible for their stomachs to bear. They will be forced to throw it up. You cannot thumbscrew men or ostracize men or

punish men anyhow for having different opinions. That is the trouble with my sick man now; I *cannot* make him keep his food down."

"If I were to go out and preach all that here, Doctor, they would rise in a body and drive me out."

"That would be a pity, Parson. Don't you do it. But I am going down now to see the sick man in your house. That excellent loaf we have just been eating makes me feel fit for work and a walk. But if I were to go there and give it to Joe it would kill him inside six hours. Perhaps I may give it to him six weeks from now with advantage."

"But, Doctor, I feel I ought not to hide the truth as I see it."

"Well then, Parson, you shouldn't want to be wiser than your Master. When he came to the conclusion that the intellect of the Galilean Jew of A.D. 31 wasn't able to grasp his wisdom, he gave them just enough of the water of life in parables not to choke them and just enough of the bread of life not to give them spiritual indigestion. 'Except in parables, spake he not at all.'

He explained them to the disciples to whom he could devote plenty of time. Even when they asked him direct questions he didn't always answer them. I have sometimes thought that they showed mighty little intelligence to need those long explanations, and after all they showed very little real appreciation of his teaching. I never forget, when I think of inspiration, James and John quarreling as to which of them was to get the most out of it, just after they had had the Last Supper. Yet I half liked them for it, because it made them so human — more like myself. I admired them more when I believed that they minded those floggings and stonings and loneliness and misunderstanding more because of it. They must have lain awake in bed and worried just as I do, instead of being like those ecclesiastical effigies on tombs, or as they are shown in 'religious' pictures, with an unnatural enjoyment of arrows through their vital organs.

"Come on, Parson. My sick man needs me and you have some one who needs you. If you will confess, as I

know you will, that you don't know all about the right treatment yet, and will go out and ask Him who does know to make you wise as a child of light should be, you will get the knowledge necessary to help you win men to the way of life; and you will be a happier man if you use your God-given manhood and common sense to give or withhold rather than, when any earnest or needy man asks you how he can win out in the battle with sin, feel you must reply, 'Say Shibboleth,' and if he can't say it with an 'h,' slay him everlastingly, even in your own mind."

To sum up. One of the inevitable lessons of the medical profession has, alas, to be emphasized in the post-mortem room; viz., that all human intelligence is human still. No lesson is more needed than this by would-be advocates of Christ's way of life. That such a leader of men as Joshua, who so successfully brought his people into their promised land, should allow to go on record the repeated divine entreaties to keep up his courage suggests the recognition on his part of another of our

greatest needs. Others besides popes have lacked courage to abandon indefensible positions, such as that the world was flat, until they were forced to do so at the point of the bayonet. Their reason was simply the hoary antiquity of the point in question and their own lack of wisdom. "Let them say" is a far better answer to "What will men say?" than any dictated by fear, which does despite to such common sense as we do possess.

The clinic of two surgeons at the insignificant town of Rochester in Minnesota has become world famous and world useful because of their willingness, their eagerness in fact, to abandon methods or theories which new knowledge had superseded, even though in their day and generation they might have served to save life.

Fearlessness is a vital factor in real faith. To boast of the little we believe is a confession of weakness. It is an evidence of manliness and the road to achievement to be able to believe much. It was no sign of credulity in Fulton that he should have wished to be buried on

the banks of the Ohio, so sure was he that some day the sound of vessels propelled by steam would resound over its waters.

Men will always flock to the colors at the call to service, if only they are the right colors. Not infallibility, but common sense and unselfish courage; not denunciation, but courageous optimism and the humility which characterizes aspiration are the colors the display of which will without fail to-day and every day rally men to the company of Jesus Christ.



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